

HOW TO LOSE WEIGHT AND MAINTAIN ENERGY

If you have excess body fat that you want to lose, you must understand that diets don't work! In order to lose weight healthfully and successfully keep it off, you should look at your *eating*. After all, eating contributes to weight-problems ...particularly the over-eating that commonly occurs after blowing a strict diet.

Strict diets teach you willpower. Strict diets leave you feeling deprived of one of life's pleasures - food. Rather than *diet*, you should learn how to healthfully eat *diet portions* of any food that you currently enjoy and would like to eat throughout the rest of your life. Healthful eating offers more long-term success than crash dieting. Healthful eating also ensures adequate vitamins, minerals, protein and carbohydrates -- the nutrients you need to exercise at your best.

The following eating tips can help you successfully lose weight *plus* have energy to train hard and exercise at your best. Expect to gradually lose weight at a realistic rate of one-half to three pounds per week depending on your body size and total amount of fat you have to lose.

Twelve Steps for Successful Weight Reduction

#1. Write down what you typically eat in a day, then evaluate your meal patterns and eating habits. Do you nibble all afternoon? Devour huge dinners? Munch-out at night? If you eat very few calories during the day but then over-eat at night, experiment with eating a bigger breakfast, lunch and a planned afternoon snack. Then you will be less hungry at night and better able to eat a smaller dinner.

By giving yourself permission to eat more calories during the day, you will not only have more energy to exercise, you will also prevent yourself from getting *too* hungry. Generally speaking, once people are ravenously hungry, they don't care about what they eat nor *how much* and can too easily over-eat.

#2. If you over-eat when you are stressed, nervous or lonely, remember that no amount of food will satisfy you. You really need a hug and *human* comforting. Food is only fuel. It will not resolve your problems.

#3. To lose weight appropriately, you should know your calorie budget. To determine the number of calories for your reduction diet, you first need to estimate your maintenance calories:

- Multiply your desired weight by 10 to determine your *resting metabolic rate* (the amount of calories you need to simply lay in bed all day and breathe). For example, if your target weight is 120 pounds, your resting metabolic rate is about 1,200 calories. You burn off these calories even if you are injured or taking a rest day from exercise.

- Add another third to half of that number for your general daily activity *excluding* your specific training or exercise program. If you are mostly sitting, studying, or working at a desk, you need fewer calories than if you are active during the day (i.e. going up and down stairs, walking around, doing errands). For example, a 120 pound mother with two children is quite active and burns approximately:
1,200 calories (resting metabolism) + 600 calories (general activity) = 1,800 calories (without exercise).

- Next, add on calories burned off during your exercise program. Here is the calorie expenditure for some popular sports, based upon *weight and calories burned per minute* of activity:

<u>Activity</u>	<u>110</u>	<u>130</u>	<u>150</u>	<u>170 lbs body weight</u>
Biking, 13 mph	8.5	10.0	11.5	13.0 calories burned per minute
Running, 8min/mile	10.8	12.5	14.2	16.0
Squash	10.6	12.5	14.4	16.3
Swimming, hard	7.8	9.2	10.6	12.0
Walking, normal pace	4.0	4.7	5.4	6.2

From: *Exercise Physiology: Energy, Nutrition and Weight Control*. W. McArdle, F. Katch & V. Katch, Lea & Febiger 1991

NOTE: This is a *rough estimate* of your calorie needs. You may burn more calories or fewer calories, depending on many factors unique to your body. For example, fidgeters need more calories than mellow folk & A registered dietitian can help you more accurately determine your actual energy needs.

#4. Subtract 20% of your maintenance calories to determine an appropriate calorie target for weight loss. For example, if you maintain your weight on about 2,000 calories, you should plan to lose weight on about 1,600 calories. Note that petite athletes (i.e. skaters, gymnasts, dancers) will subtract fewer calories than bigger athletes (football players, body builders). If you cut back more than 20%, you will likely become ravenously hungry and put yourself at high risk of blowing your diet.

#5. Organize your eating into a balanced plan. For example, divide your 1,600 calorie diet into three meals plus snacks, such as: breakfast - 500 calories; lunch - 500 calories; afternoon snack - 100 calories; dinner - 500 calories. By eating the majority of your calories *during the day*, you will have energy to exercise at your best. You will also be able to (easily) “diet” at night because you will be less hungry. Remember: you will not gain weight by eating a substantial breakfast or lunch. You will gain weight, however, if you skimp on these meals, get too hungry and then over-eat during the evening...!

#6. Eat slowly. Over-weight people tend to eat faster than their normal-weight counterparts. Your brain needs about 20 minutes to receive the signal that you have eaten your fill. No matter how much you consume during these twenty minutes, the satiety signal won't move any faster. Hence, you should try to pace your eating. Practice chewing slowly, putting down the fork between bites rather than eating nonstop, and tasting and savoring the food.

#7. Once a week, relax and enjoy a piece of birthday cake, a special Sunday breakfast or a planned treat. This will give you incentive to maintain your reducing program when tempted at other times. When enjoying this treat, be sure to eat it slowly to fully enjoy the taste. After all, the best part about food is the taste.

#8. Keep away from food sources that tempt you. For example, read the newspaper in the living room rather than the kitchen. Avoid jogging past the bakery. Stand away from the buffet table at a party. By keeping the food out of sight, you will be more likely to keep it out of mind -- and out of your mouth!

#9. If you tend to eat because you are bored, stressed, tired or lonely, make a list of ten non-food activities that you can do instead of eating: water the plants, take a bath, call a friend, write letters, go for a walk, go to sleep, etc.. If you eat because you are stressed, take steps to resolve the *real* problem. Recognize that *no* amount of food will resolve the stress. Learn how to handle stress and anxiety *without* over-eating.

#10. Think positive. Every morning before you get out of bed, visualize yourself eating appropriately and achieving your nutrition goals. This will help you start the day with a positive attitude. Continually remind yourself that you would rather be leaner than over-eat.

#11. Measure success by looking at yourself naked in the mirror. If you see, and pinch, less fat, you *have* less fat! If you weigh yourself, do so once a week first thing in the morning, after you have gone to the bathroom and before you have eaten. Don't weigh yourself after a workout or at night -- that gives a false weight! Remember that if you are starting an exercise program, you may gain pounds of muscle while you lose pounds of fat. The scale may read the same weight, but your body will be different.

#12. Be proud of your healthy eating patterns and keep reminding yourself that when you eat well, you not only feel better but you also feel better about yourself. Plus, you have enough energy to exercise and enjoy life.